

Joseph Claudius Hicken History 1886- 1966
as seen by Don L. Hicken

Chapter 1 Birth and Childhood

He was born 19 September 1886 , the third son of Addison and Sophie Elizabeth Hicken . His grand parents were Thomas Hicken and Cathrine Fewkes and Thomas Moulton and Sarah Denton . He was born at his home at 212 South 100 West Heber City, Utah . On the 4 November 1886 he was blessed by Thomas Hicken , his grandfather.

His early life was taken up with farm work , milking cows, and helping at home wherever he was needed . Claude was a willing and capable boy , was anxious to do his share and showed early signs of being a creative person .

In his early childhood he and his brothers made their own play such as crickets, baseball , marbles, mumble peg etc. They created a " merry-go-round", by setting a post in the ground with a pin in the top and put a plank over the pin . Two of them would start pushing it and after they got a good speed they would jump on and enjoy the ride . They did enjoy what little time they had to play .

Chapter 2 His Schooling

Joseph Claudius Hicken has gone through his life being referred to as , J. C. , J. Claude , Claude , this was in every walk of his life .

He started his schooling in the "old sleepy hollow school " located on the West side of main street about 3rd South and between first and second West, it was a rock building . When the Central School was started he went there and graduated from the eighth grade . His next move was to the B Y Academy in Provo , for one year . He took classes , architecture, along with regular school classes . Claude was a good and devoted student and always made the best use of his time .

Chapter 3 Church activities

J. Claude comes from a very religious oriented family . His grandfather joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in 1845 in England . He and his family have continued to serve faithfully , as members of the Church of Jesus Christ of L.D.S. .

The 24 August 1895 Claude was baptised by John W. Crook and confirmed by his uncle Thos. Hicken Jr. His ordinations are : Deacon, November 30 , 1901 by John E. Moulton ; Teacher , February 26, 1905 by Fredrick Crook ; Elder, September 3, 1906 by Fredrick Crook ; Seventy 1907 by John W. Winterrose ; High Priest on the 26 December 1920 by Joseph R. Murdock . His line of authority : Joseph R. Murdock was ordained by Francis M. Lyman, who was ordained by John Taylor, who was ordained by Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, who were ordained by Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received the priesthood from Peter James and John who received it from Jesus Christ the Son of God. He received his patriarchal blessing from Patriarch Thomas Hicken, his grandfather, 6 February 1906 .

In December 1921 he was called to be the 2nd counselor to Bishop Fredrick Crook in the Heber Third Ward, Wasatch Stake. He served until February of 1931 . During this time he served mostly with the young folks , serving on the scout troop committee and was responsible for transportation

to their many activities . A few are : Pine Valley near St George, Utah , Scout camp at Mt. Timpanogos , Strawberry Ranger Station for a winter outing.

He was very mindful of the ward members and their needs, many times he took from his own , flour and other foods and delivered to those in need with no information as to the giver .

Claude was also active in the Sunday School , YMMIA and many other areas of the ward needs , he was very helpful with Mother in the Relief Society and Primary. His devotion and drive helped to make the Scout Troop # 64 one of the greatest ever. He made every organization he worked in better and more productive and instilled a spiritual attitude among his fellow workers . He had a strong testimony that Jesus is the Christ and that the Church is Christs' and is under His direction .

Chapter 4 Courtship and marriage and his family

In his teens Dad had an eye for a very choice youn lady , Verna Mahoney . He felt she was about the nicest gal he had ever known . After a few dates they decided marriage was their goal, so on 10 October 1906 they were married in the Salt Lake Temple for time and eternity. Verna is the oldest child of Jeremiah Worthington and Sarah Giles Mahoney .

Verna May was a very quit and attentive person, she was very conscious of the needs of other people both physically and spiritually and was always ready to give aid to anyone . She was a devoted wife and mother to Claude and their family . She supported and assisted Dad in all their ventures .

To them were born two sons and three daughters : Cyril M. Venice, Don L. , Nelda and Yvonne . and to complete their family, mothers' sister Mable Mahoney, came to live with them when she was about 5 years old. Her mother died when she was born and her Aunt Nancy took her for a few years to get her started , Aunt Nancy had a baby boy Mables' age . Mable was just like a sister to all of us, she was so kind and helpful and did ever so much to make our home the best place on earth . She was very talented and brought much joy and happiness to our family. I was very much impressed with the way Dad accepted Mable . There was no difference in the way he treated her ,she was just one of us. Dad always respected her in every way . She lived with us until her marriage to Maynard L. Burgener .

When Claude and Verna married their assets were : one cow, one horse and \$11.00 they also had a small piece of property at 314 East 600 South in Heber . Grandpa Mahoney gave them a mare, Old Vick , which gave them a team, Vick and Jim , I remember Old vick as a young child.

After Dad made up a team of horses , he and his Brother Leige got together and decided if Dad would furnish the team

Leige would drive them and then they would split the pay. They hauled timber to Park City and worked on the reserviors at the head of Provo River . This helped their finances a great deal .

They built a house on the property on 600 South and finished a room and moved in . As each child came along more was done until they had built a large and beautiful home . It was some twenty years later that they remodled and put a bathroom and central heating in, what a thrill .

It is note worthy that Claude and Verna supported their children, Mable included, in all their activities , church and school.They would attend all functions that anyone of the family was a part

of. They both were especially fond of music ,Dad played the violin and mandolin and mother had a beautiful voice . So they encouraged all their children to participate in music . All their children played an instrument and the girls all played the piano .They both followed the band because of their children . Its concerts, its contest and were in attendance at nearly all the music contest that were held by the school, many in other cities . Music played a happy part of their home and family .Claude was a good and kind father . The home today (1995) belongs to Claude R. Hicken, Cyrils' son.

Chapter 5 Civic and Special

In 1920 J. Claude was elected to the Heber City Council . His decision was to improve our city and make it a more desirable place to live . Such as , improve the roads, they were dirt roads at that time, to continue to improve the water system . He spent many hours permoting and assisting a better and safer city. He supported many city activities such as the annual "Christmas Tree" that was set up in the middle of main and Center street . This was a very happy time for all the towns people . To say the least he was always there to give what ever assistance he could .

He served several years as director in the Heber City Exchange department store . He wanted to improve things ,that he may be able to serve his fellowmen better and more profitable as evidenced by many of his latter projects .

Chapter Some Helps and Firsts

At an earley age J. Claude showed evidence of his ability to meet and solve problems, and to make life easier by creating items that would do the job better and easier .

When dad went into the slaughter business he found it necessary to lift the animal carcass into the air to prepare them for market and to get them into the cooler. He built what I will call a windless . It was a unit with about a twelve inch round drum that was fastened to a frame that was anchored to the floor. On the drum he wound a one inch manila rope , the one end attached to the drum the other to a circle that it turned and as the drum on the floor turned it turned the upper circle which in turned would lift what ever was attached to it into the air, the heigth could be controlled , it really worked. Along with the Slaughter business he needed some place to cool and season the meat so he built a building large enough to store many tons of ice , sufficient to last through the summer months . The ice was put on both sides of a hall that was some five feet wide, the building was insulated on all sides , top and bottom . In the hall he installed two tracks on which he hung the beef, pork and other dressed carcasses, to cool and age in prepration for delivery .

When the need to build chicken coops came he designed and built a swing saw that he used to cut studs, rafters and other lumber to length , they were more exact and much faster . Along with this he cut his own logs and had them sawed into lumber, the interesting part of this is that he trained a horse to snake logs without having a driver . Dad moved the logs by talking to "Old Bolly" and I never did see the horse fail .

Claude was first a farmer and everything he did was related in some way to the farm . In our area to raise a crop it had to have water and that was done by flood irrigation . Now all land is not level so Dad decided he needed something that he could move soil from one area to a lower area so he

designed what he called a gauger . It was a land levelier with a unit in the middle that could be lowered and would pick up soil and carry it until it was released . It was pulled with horses . There was no such thing as tractors. It did a great job and there were many that used it .

In his many ventures he hired many men and boys , as Walter Montgomery put it "when I needed some money or help I could go to Claude and ask if he had work I could do and always there was something , not only that, as soon as the work was done I had my money, and sometimes even before". Claude was one of the few farmers that hired men and boys .

He was one of the first in our valley to operate a feed yard and for many years he used it in connection with his business of meats . He fed both cattle and sheep . He also maintained a pig raising business . Dad was a lover of animals .

J. Claude built and operated the first "custom grain processing" business in the valley. He would take the persons grain, chop or roll it add needed ingredients and mix it together . He also installed the first grain seed cleaner and treatment unit . I believe these were some of the biggest helps that was started for the farmer .

When he built his chicken coops he designed a nest that could be gotten to from behind so that you did not disturb the chickens . He also built an egg carrier to move the eggs through the coops to the egg cellar, it was simple but could haul some 6 baskets of eggs. He designed and built a chicken watering fountain , one fountain watered a coop of 300 hens .

When tractors and trucks were made and became available , he was one of the first to buy a Fordson Tractor , which he used to chop feed and hay , to run the swing saw, as well as some leveling and harrowing. As trucks became available he started to use them and of course there was a need to keep the frost off the windshield . He designed and built a unit that worked great, taking air from behind the radiator and bringing up on the inside of the windshield . He funneled it across the entire windshield area. The car builders came years later with a similar type of cleaner , that was run with a motor. He built the first dome front on a truck bed and today you see most all large trucks have a very similar one on them .

He owned and operated the first Self Propelled combine used in the valley . It was a twelve foot Case Combine . He did custom work for many people .

Perhaps the most successful and satisfying thing he did was to design a unit to use on his right hand after he lost his hand . There were no commercial types that could work for him . The unit was very simple, according to him . It had three hooks formed just right to handle sacks and was held on his arm by a glove type three strap unit and padded next to the skin . It worked and a person could not tell he had a handicap . He was the best help available to load any kind of livestock .

Another important first in our valley was the starting of the first "Common Carrier Truck Line" . This was started in the early 1930s but it took several years to get the Public Service to grant the permit . His son Don was working with him on this .

Chapter 7 His Work and Business

J. Claude was self employed all his life except for time he would help farmers in their hay crop . Also many of his ventures was doing custom work for people , such as grain binding, combining, leveling and others.

Claudes' first project was to buy hides and pelts. During his teen years he would purchase from individuals, hides and pelts from the cattle or sheep they had killed. In those days most farmers raised and killed their own animals. He would then sell them through the "Hicken Meat Shop". An interesting part of his venture was his ability to grade the different hides. He knew a top hide or pelt and so when a buyer came to purchase from him he would not let them take advantage by claiming they were not top value, he knew and stuck to his guns. He did not stop there, he would take his money and buy calves and trade etc. until at the time of their marriage Dad had a few acres of land located on 600 South and 300 East in Heber, Utah.

After marriage he earned some monies by use of his team. During this era he did not lose sight of his farming nor did he neglect any part of it. First they built their home and set goals to get more land in the area about them, this they did over the years some two hundred acres.

Dad and Mother decided that they could do well in the slaughter business, Dad had considerable know how and they felt that they could make a good business of it, so they started. They served Hoover Meats in Park City as well as Palace Meats of the same area. They also had a retail business of eggs and butter.

Just a little detail on this activity: I will try to picture how he had arranged to effectively handle animals. He built his corals and feed yard with an opening at the North West corner from which a gate, some 16 or so feet long was hung and as it was opened it formed a fence along the east side of a run way, on the West he hung another gate to form the drive way, it worked great. This driveway empties into a holding pen that then opened to the killing chute. As the animal was killed it rolled into the slaughter house where it was skinned, prepared and hung in the cooler. At this time pigs were scalded and scraped and Claude had made a large open steel vat in which he scalded the pigs and chickens in their preparation, these were also put into the cooler.

The following morning it was loaded on wagon, a sleigh in the winter, he usually used two teams, and off to Park he would go. He went as far as Jordanelle and then went West over the mountain to the upper end of Park City. Let's pause here and review the preparation to leave on this delivery job. He was up around three A.M. He fed and cared for the teams. In the winter he would put a large sand rock in the oven or on the stove to heat up and it would be put in the sleigh to keep his feet somewhat comfortable. He would then load the meat on to the unit he was using and which had been placed ready to load, he covered and made the meat safe and clean. He would then have a bite of breakfast and get his teams ready and hooked to the units he was using that trip. He dressed in a horsehide coat, a long one, then with lined horsehide mittens and good overshoes he was ready to go, usually about five A.M. He also delivered to many Park City homes, butter and eggs and also some in Heber. When trucks became available he did his delivering by truck. It was much easier and faster. The meats he furnished were beef, pork, veal, mutton, and chickens.

He set up several guide lines in his butcher business #1. He would kill only animals that were healthy and in prime condition. He fed and prepared most of his cattle, as well as most of his sheep and pigs. He was very particular with any animal that he purchased. Likewise with the chickens, they must be the best and in good health. #2. Keep the slaughter house in top notch condition, namely, clean with everything in its place. #3. Put all finished meats in the cooler. All the covers and tarps he used were washed and kept clean.

To meet his needs for livestock he purchased many from folks in the Kamas and Park City areas, as well as Heber. They were taken to the pasture or feed yards in Heber and fed until they were ready to butcher. If it were pigs or veal he usually picked them up at the producers home and

transported them to the slaughter house , he never drove these animals. This proved to be a very good and profitable business .

During all Claudes' ventures he always farmed and took very good care of that portion of his work.

He and Mother started to raise chickens , they built an incubator and hatched their baby chicks , they had the misfortune to loose one bunch from a fire , they saved the coop . They built an incubator building for this purpose . It is Claude R. Hicken' office as of 1995. They felt that chickens would be a good business, but that it should be in a larger degree than they could then do . So they decided to build more coops , both brooder and hen coops. Dad purchased a timber permit and logged and had sawed the lumber that was needed for the coops . They purchased several thousand chicks and brooded them in brooders in single small coops for a year or so. But that was not all they wanted so he followed the lumber pattern and got more lumber ,built a large brooder, it could handle 12000 or more chicks at one time, he also built more coops, each one could house some 300 laying hens. They were keeping around 4000 plus laying hens , it was working good . They had put in equipment to grind and mix the chicken feeds, had purchased a truck to haul eggs to the Utah Poultry and were agents for the Utah Poultry Ass'n. Dad used lights to get the chicken into a longer day and with the lights he needed dimmer lights to put them to roost . He built a unit using an alarm clock that would turn the ligts on then dim them and then off all that needed done was to wind the clock each day .We were also over run with warf rats, they could and did eat more than a chicken , something had to be done . Dad said let's use our dog, Mike, and see what happens ; we did, and each night we went through the coops . The plan we followed was : after the lights were dimmed we would open the door into the coop when all were ready to enter, the dog first and we followed. Mike would get serveral , as many as three at a time . Between the roof and the roosts there was a linning, here rats would congregate .We would flash a light on them and with a 210 shotgun aimed in their direction we would fire and many would run to the opening and drop to the floor where Mike and we would kill them. We then checked the nests and many would get on the dividers and their tails hung down, Dad would take the tail and with a quick flip they hit the floor dead . This was repeated in each coop . It was not uncommon to get over fifty rats a night .

The business was doing wonderfully well , until they purchsed, in two consecutive years, baby chicks that were infected and the loss was tremendous. We ended up with only a few hundred hens, and they were not to good . So Dad and Mother decided perhaps it would be better to follow the feed business , which had developed considerably during the chicken business .

In 1931 Dad met with an accident , while he and Cyril were chopping hay, Dad reached up to pull some chopped hay down and was caught by the chopper blades, cutting his fingers and hitting his hand and arm . Cyril knocked him away from the chopper and then took him to the Hospital. He lost all his right hand fingers and thumb ,gratefully the rest was saved . He designed and had Byron Pierce make a usable and effective substitute hand .

Dad again got a permit for timber and got lumber to build a mill on fifth West and First South in Heber, Utah . Which he designed and built . This was the first such operation in the valley . He ground, chopped, rolled and mixed customers feed according to their formula , he would help them, if they so desired , to make up a formula . He also paid cash for grains of every kind and offered all and every kind of livestock feed and farm needs. also seeds as well as flour, cereals and related foods . He also operated a grain and seed cleaning operation . It was a great help to growers.

The chicken and feed businesses led to the trucking business, these businesses had become family projects and all of the children were involved. We hauled our own feeds , eggs and etc. and soon we

were hauling other peoples eggs and feeds to them so it was natural that many asked us to get this or that for them .

In 1933, Dad decided ,after many of the local merchants had approached him to haul their merchandise from Provo, that we should try for a permit. At that time all trucking was controlled. Any freighting had to be done under a permit . So we made application, I say we for Don was now in partnership with him, for a contract carrier permit . This would give us rights to haul to certain customers, but not all . It was granted and thus began our trucking business . Some of our customers were: Utah Poultry , Heber City Exchange, Heber Mercantile, Buells Grocery, Bonners Grocery ,Guy Colemans , Anderson Hardware, O P Skaggs, Pikes Peak Garage, Heber Motor, Lee Holdaway Plumbing .

It was not long before we had ever so many asking that we pickup items for them. So the next year we made application for a Common Carrier by Truck Line . We did receive additions to our contract permits and also operated from Salt Lake City , but they denied a common carrier permit.

We persisted and finally they gave us a Truck Common Carrier permit, along with two other carriers, Sterling Transportation and RioGrande Motor Ways. We were the first to start and carry it on. We served the area from Keetley on the North to the mouth of Provo Canyon on the South . It is still in operation under the Park City Truck Lines. It was Claudes' desire to offer a truck service that would give our customers a full and complete carrier service at a fair and agreeable price and this he certainly did and was also carried on by Don . Just one example, we took an order in and returned it the same day, and the mimium was only 35 cents . The Rio Grande Motor operated about one week and pulled out and Sterling had very few they served, their business was in the Uintah Basin area. At about this time Claude took over the mill operations and Don took over the Truck Line operations . Both worked together and had a very successful business .

During and parrell to all the other operations of Claudes' he operated his farm. The farm was his joy and it was his desire to do the very best that he could . Dad felt that he should get all that the ground could produce. To do so he felt that first he must fertilize , then thoroughly work the land and prepare it for irrigation as well as for the crop. The seed he used he felt should be the best and the cleanest that he could find .

In view of these desires he set out to do them. Here are a few of the things he did. He always used all the barnyard cleanup and spread it on the ground, rotating from field to field and piece to piece, likewise with all the chicken droppings and litter it was evenly spread on the land . If he did not have enough natural fertilizer then he put on commercial types . He used the best equipment he could buy or make, only that which he felt would do a perfect job . The crops they grew were wheat, barley , oats, alfalfa, peas, potatoes and pasture . Dad tried many types of seed in each kind of grain , He liked the " dicklo club" wheat, so to get the best seed possible he and mother picked the wheat heads to be sure a clean strain was had ,they picked enough to plant an acre and then proceeded to improve their wheat crop . Like wise with barley , he found that gem was better on more aired ground and that bonnevillie was better on more wet ground . Yes he did a good work here and produced from about 70 bushel to 120 bushels per acre. He used many types of alfalfa seed but found Ranger to be about the best. It was with the planting of alfalfa that he planted peas. The pea crop would be harvested in June of July and then he would plant the alfalfa on that ground, which he had prepared especially for the alfalfa before he planted the peas . He got the best crop of alfalfa by this method. If no peas, then he used a nurse crop of oats and cut it early for hay .

At the time he raised potatoes he rigged up a potatoe seed cutter which certasinly increased the amount of potatoes cut for seed. It was quite simple, on a vee shaped inclined holder that you would

fill with your seed and at the bottom he had a knife blade inserted up through the narrow part of the vee. Around the knife blade he made a shield to keep the potatoes from rolling on to your hand, you just picked up a potatoe and cut it two or four ways, if a larger spud cut more times. This was ten times faster as well as being safer. Yes, and you could sit while you worked.

One of the interesting areas was the harvest. Claude usely had all available equipment to do his work. At haying time he hired many boys and men. It worked like this: a man cut the hay with a five foot mower pulled by a team, an older boy would rake, a dump type rake, and then pile it with the rake. The crew to haul the hay were two men in the field to pitch the hay on to the wagon, a boy, in his top teens, to tromp and set the nets, two men on the stack in the barn and a boy to handle the team on the unloading. It took only a few minutes to unload a wagon, three pulls and it was off. For grain Dad had a binder, pulled by three horses. It cut and bound the grain into bundles which bundles a man or boy would shock, standing the bundles with heads up and it was left to dry. When the thrashers came a crew of at least eight men were used, besides the thrasher crew, two in the field, two on wagons, two on the grain side and two on the straw stack. Dad very seldom stacked his grain, if it were stacked they were round ones.

Thrashing time was different, this was one time the farmer fed all the hands that worked on the thrashing. In Dads case it took several days. Thanks to Mother, the men were fed very well and never did I hear a single complaint.

When peas were harvested a mower with a windrower behind was used. We then loaded them by hand on a hay rack and hauled them to the cannery. The potatoes were plowed up hand picked and bagged ready for delivery. Harvest Days were busy and happy days.

In summery: Joseph Claudius Hicken was a devoted and loving Husband and Father who had very deep feeling of love and appreciation for Verna, his Wife and our Mother. The most trears that I ever saw Dad shed was for Mother and many of her conditions. He was a kind and considerate person of others problems. Many times I have witnessed accounts being forgiven because of the patrons' condition. I have seen help given to many, in labor, use of equipment and anything that may be needed. He was completly honest in his dealings with fellowmen. An error was always immediatly corrected.

Claude did not take much time off for pleasure seeking. I will just mention a few. In the 1920s he took his family and went to Yellowstone Park, this was one trip most will remember. While there a forest fire got started and we all were frightened as we saw the big pine trees catch fire and go up like a saturated gas stick. Dad was very cautious and careful but he let us view the inferno, he taught us a lesson there, to be careful with matches and to not ever start a fire in dangerous places. Dad was a very good fisherman. I remember one time at a lake he was catching fish from the bank and it seemed to me that he would barely let his line hit the warter and up came a fish. He soon had his limit. Dad favored fly fishing. Claude liked baseball and played lots of it. He also received a thrill from watching a ball game. We used to go to the Lukes Hot Pots to swim, we had lots of fun there and I was impressed with how well Dad could swim. His knowledge of swimming helped us when scouting came along. He went with us many times to help and teach. There were many Hicken reunions held at the Lukes Hot Pots and Dad was there doing his part to make it a happy time. He took a trip into Canada and the North West. Many times he would go to one of his children's homes. Dad enjoyed visiting with his children. He made many trips in support of his children.

July 1964 Verna passed to the beyond and it was a hard thing for Dad to meet, but he did it. Yet

never did Mothers' influence leave him for in all honesty he had relied so much on the wisdom Verna displayed in his behalf , that it was just a part of him .

As I come to the close of this short history I would like to express my love and appreciation to Dad, yes , and Mother, for the way he cleared up his earthly holdings, we experienced no expense at all in handling the closing of his estate .

In July of 1966 he was operated on and found cancer had taken a good part of his liver as well as much of the colon. His spirits were good even though there was very little hope given him for much extended life . The night before he passed beyond he said to me , "Don, I am not afraid to die , the only thing that worries me is "How shall I meet your mother" . I do not think that he had to worry, for I am satisfied Mother came to take him home , the 26 October 1966 .

To a pioneer, a spiritually active , industrious , genius and loving husband and father , we say thanks for all you have done for so many .